

REMARKS

Claims 22-26 are pending in the application. Claims 1-10 have been withdrawn from consideration. Claims 11-21 have been cancelled. In view of the following remarks, Applicant respectfully requests allowance of the pending claims.

Election/Restriction

Applicant hereby confirms Applicant's election by telephone on September 17, 2002, to prosecute claims 11-21 (Group II). Claims 1-10 have been withdrawn from consideration.

Rejection of Claim 12 and 13 Under § 112

Claims 12 and 13 have been cancelled. New claim 22 has been drafted to avoid the problems identified by the Examiner in claims 12 and 13.

Rejection of Claims 11 and 14-21 Under § 102

Claims 11 and 14-21 have been cancelled. For the following reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that new claims 22-26 are patentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,342,336 ("Satterthwaite").

Satterthwaite does not teach or suggest "at least one parallel ring attached to said stator . . . including a channel for mounting an air gap baffle seal" Nor does Satterthwaite teach or suggest "an access portion attachable to said parallel ring for securing said air gap baffle seal in said channel of said parallel ring" These are important features of Applicant's claimed invention. In many electrical generators, the gas pressure in the air gap of the generator is kept lower than the overall pressure in the frame of the generator through the use of an air gap baffle.

Because of tight tolerances between the baffle and the rest of the generator, it is difficult to repair or replace the baffle without removing the generator's rotor. The parallel ring and access portion recited in claim 22 address this problem by providing a mount for the air gap baffle seal that permits easy removal during repair or replace the seal. Accordingly, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 22-26 are patentably novel and unobvious over Satterthwaite.

Rejection of Claims 11-13 Under § 103

Claims 11-13 have been cancelled. For the following reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that new claims 22-26 are patentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,177,385 ("Cooper") and U.S. Patent No. 4,342,336 ("Satterthwaite").

Neither Cooper nor Satterthwaite (as discussed above) teaches or discloses "at least one parallel ring attached to said stator . . . including a channel for mounting an air gap baffle seal" or "an access portion attachable to said parallel ring for securing said air gap baffle seal in said channel of said parallel ring" The significance of these claimed features has been set forth above. Base on the lack of a teaching or suggestion of these features in Cooper or Satterthwaite, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 22-26 are patentably novel and unobvious over Cooper and Satterthwaite.

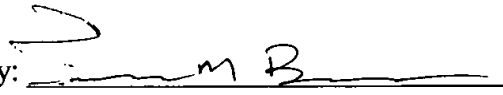
CONCLUSION

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully requests allowance of claims 22-26. Should the Examiner have any questions concerning this paper or application, or if any issues remain, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Applicant's undersigned attorney to resolve such issue or question.

The commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any appropriate fees due in connection with this paper or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 19-2179.

Respectfully submitted,

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

IN THE CLAIMS:

Add new claim 22-26 as follows:

22. An air gap baffle sealing system for directing coolant flow in an electrical generator having a rotor and a stator and an air gap therebetween, said system comprising:

at least one parallel ring attached to said stator, said parallel ring including a channel for mounting an air gap baffle seal;

an access portion attachable to said parallel ring for securing said air gap baffle seal in said channel of said parallel ring;

wherein said air gap baffle seal includes a substantially hollow portion that extends said air gap baffle seal from a first, non-sealing position to a second, sealing position when filled with a filling medium; and

whereby said air gap baffle seal may be removed from said electrical generator for repair or maintenance without requiring the removal of said rotor.

23. The seal system of claim 22, wherein the medium is selected from the group consisting of gas, fluid, gel, silicone rubber and combinations thereof.

24. The seal system of claim 22, wherein the seal is made of a rubber material.

25. The seal system of claim 22, wherein when the hollow portion is filled with the filling medium, the seal expands into the gap and attains an operation orientation.

26. The seal system of claim 25, wherein the seal completely obstructs the gap when in the operation orientation.